





# Acknowledgement

Australian Regional and Remote Community Services acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we work, live and connect to Australia's First Nations People. We draw on a rich history of compassion and empathy for those who are most in need. While we work to affirm the rights of all people, ARRCs as an organisation and its employees, ensures proactive leadership and action to help repair the harm caused to many generations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples through past injustices, government policies and social attitudes. We understand the importance of belonging, particularly for those with ancestral connections to this country.

Warning: This document may contain images and names of deceased persons.

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# Message from our Chair

**In a crisis, it is often the communities that Australian Regional and Remote Community Services (ARRCS) serves who feel the impacts most. Once again, we have seen ARRCS rise to the challenge; providing holistic and quality care with cultural integrity in the Northern Territory.**

Staying on the course set by the ARRCS Strategic Plan has been challenging while navigating restrictions and other impacts of the global pandemic, the continually changing regulatory environment and the increase in demand for dementia management and end-of-life care in this population.

Against this complex background, ARRCS has delivered significant outcomes against each of the five strategic priorities; notably implementing a new model of care in our residential aged care facilities, effectively consulting with Elders on the Nhulunbuy Flexible Aged Care development and establishing strategic partnerships to address our workforce challenges in the region.

The Board and I are very proud of ARRCS' performance during FY2020-2021.

It is important to acknowledge the team behind the achievements reported in this annual review. My sincere gratitude goes to the more than 700 people at ARRCS for showing resilience and the ability – drawing on a rich history of compassion and empathy for those who are most in need – to deliver our mission in people's time of need.

Their unwavering dedication to keeping our communities safe, happy and healthy, today and into the future is a true expression of the Uniting Church's mission.

In FY2020-2021, ARRCS has thrived in the face of adversity; leading the way in delivering significant improvements that will have long-term benefits for the health and quality of life for Australians living in regional and remote areas of the Northern Territory.

On behalf of the Board, I thank the ARRCS leadership team for collaborating productively with UnitingCare Queensland to steer the organisation through uncharted territory and empower staff and volunteers to deliver so many positive outcomes for those who are most vulnerable.

**Craig Barke**

Board Chair



# Message from our Executive Director

Australian Regional and Remote Community Services (ARRCS) has worked tirelessly through the challenges of a global pandemic and despite low community cases of COVID-19 in the Northern Territory, some homes endured government-mandated lockdown restrictions for the first time, which was challenging for residents, families and our people. I sincerely thank the ARRCS leadership team for navigating us through these difficult times and all ARRCS people for continuing to put the needs of our residents and communities we serve, first.

In early 2021, ARRCS conducted a People Survey inviting our people to share their feedback and I was thrilled that we received 328 responses, representing a 45% response rate. This is the second year we have conducted the People Survey using the Insync Alignment and Engagement framework, with results benchmarked against Australian not-for-profit organisations in the health, aged care and community services sectors.

The survey results show that for 2021, ARRCS has an engagement score of 79% and an alignment score of 75% – these results position ARRCS in the top quartile of the benchmark showing an empowered and loyal workforce with a values-based culture that places our customers and those we serve at the centre of everything we do.

Workforce shortages in remote communities continue to be a challenge and these People Survey results provide key insights in developing strategies for continuous improvement across all our locations. In response to this, we have partnered with Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility scheme. I'm proud to say that 26 personal care workers and seven cooks from Samoa arrived in October 2021 and we look forward to warmly welcoming them to our homes. In addition, our

Workforce Plan continues to achieve ARRCS Strategic Plan priorities and associated deliverables sustainably.

Progress is well under way at our Nhulunbuy site, Yutjuwala Djewarr: Little Heaven. Significant work has been undertaken to engage the community, stakeholders, future staff and residents and these connections will continue to generate wonderful outcomes for the Yolngu people and ARRCS. Weather permitting, we hope to officially open Yutjuwala Djewarr in 2022.

I look forward to the continuation of respectful relationship and partnership building with our communities. Walking together, we will share experiences, culture and skills, ensuring our journey together is stronger. Supported by UnitingCare and the Uniting Church in Australia Queensland Synod, we will continue to deliver our mission to serve the Northern Territory with compassion and cultural integrity, ensuring people and communities are empowered and supported to live full and flourishing lives, regardless of their individual circumstances.

**Cathy Thomas**

Executive Director



# Board Members



## Craig Barke

### Board Chair

Craig was appointed Chair of ARRCs in 2019 and Chief Executive Officer of UnitingCare Queensland (UCQ) in 2017. He is a Certified Practising Accountant with an MBA and has extensive experience in financial management roles. Prior to his current roles, Craig was the CEO of Scenic Rim Regional Council and was a former member of the Queensland Urban Utilities Establishment Committee. Craig held a position on the UCQ Board from 2011 and the position of Chair from 2014 until 2017. Craig is passionate about improving the lives of disadvantaged youth and children in the community and is actively involved in the foster care system, as well as being an active member of the Uniting Church.



## Heather Watson

### Board Member

Heather joined the ARRCs Board in 2014. She is a lawyer with more than 30 years in legal practice, with multidisciplinary legal and governance skills. Heather is passionate about improving governance, particularly in the non-profit sector. She is currently Principal Lawyer and Director of Watson Advisory and Consulting Pty Ltd and Non-Executive Director or Chair of a variety of organisations, including Uniting Housing Ltd; Uniting in NSW, ACT, VIC and TAS; and Epic Good Foundation, among others.



## Cheryl Herbert

### Board Member

Cheryl joined the ARRCs Board in February 2020 and brings extensive experience at both an Executive and Board level. She has held CEO, Chair, and Non-Executive Director positions across the health sector, including Health Communities, Children's Health Queensland Hospital and Health Service, Lives Lived Well, Spiritus and Peach Tree Perinatal Wellness Inc. Cheryl has qualifications in nursing and midwifery and is a Fellow of the Royal Australian College of Nursing Australia, a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, and an adjunct Professor of the University of Queensland.



## Stephanie Harvey

### Board Member

Steph joined the Board in September 2019. A Bidjara woman from Queensland, Steph is a third sector leader with a career that spans government, community and not-for-profits. She has experience working with First Nations Peoples in Australia and internationally. Steph is CEO of Community First Development, a Director of The Healing Foundation, and Member of the Charity, Philanthropy and Fundraising Advisory Group to the National COVID-19 Coordination Commission. Steph was a judge for the Telstra Business Awards and Telstra Business Women's Awards. She has qualifications in business and is a Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and the Australian Institute of Management. Steph is passionate about the rights of vulnerable people and committed to social and economic equity and the principles of self-determination.



## Brian Wyborn

### Board Member

Brian joined the ARRCs Board in August 2021. He is a Director and Senior Wealth Adviser at JBWere, responsible for the provision of strategic financial and investment advice to not-for-profit and charitable organisations, including Native Title royalty trusts funds for Aboriginal communities. Brian's prior experience working within the Public Service focused on Indigenous health delivery and has a strong understanding of issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People. Brian also serves in the Australian Army Reserves and has experience in both domestic and international operations. He holds a Masters of Financial Planning, Bachelor of Business and has also completed the AICD course in Foundations for Board Directorship. As a proud Torres Strait Islander, Brian is passionate about driving social progression and improved well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.



## Kristal Kinsela

### External Member, Clinical Governance Committee

Kristal joined the Clinical Governance Committee in August 2021. A descendant of both the Jawoyn and Wiradjuri Nations, Kristal is a proud and passionate Indigenous business leader and owner who is expert at connecting people and moving them into action. After building her own professional career and a multimillion-dollar consultancy business, today she channels more than 16 years of business expertise into helping others succeed. She has worked with global businesses and all levels of government to drive their supplier diversity efforts, helping them develop procurement plans, up-skill their teams and have a positive impact on their communities. Kristal also wrote the first book published in Australia on Indigenous business procurement, *Supplier Diversity How*, which outlines five steps to supplier diversity.





## Message from our General Manager

This year Australian Regional and Remote Community Services (ARRCS) has seen much growth and development through our continued response to COVID-19, industry, and workforce challenges. I am so proud of the work of our staff in ensuring the continued care and safety of our consumers and communities in such uncertain times. Our team has proven to be flexible and responsive in adapting to new technology, additional education and training, processes, procedures and reporting requirements in such a rapidly changing environment.

Throughout these challenges, we have continued to look for ways to connect and celebrate with our people, hosting successful Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC events, maintaining community engagement and continuing to develop strong partnerships with our stakeholders.

We have completed numerous projects to deliver upgrades to several of our residential care facilities, such as bathroom renovations in Docker River, landscaping at Flynn Lodge and Old Timers, and significant upgrades to our ICT infrastructure and networks. Much work has been completed to strengthen our clinical systems and processes, with the restructure of our Clinical Governance and Risk Team to provide additional support and clinical expertise to all our services.

Innovative solutions have been implemented to improve care delivery, such as the use of facial recognition software to detect and respond to pain as soon as possible, particularly important for consumers who find it difficult to communicate. Importantly, we launched our Strategic Plan for 2021-24, the result of much consultation and collaboration with our people to create meaningful priorities to guide our work into the future.

I look forward to the year ahead and the realisation of these strategic priorities as we implement more exciting new projects to benefit our people and communities.

**Wendy Hubbard**

General Manager



# Our values

At ARRCs, we believe that our values are fundamental to the work we do.



## Compassion

Through our understanding and empathy for others, we bring holistic care, hope and inspiration.



## Respect

We accept and honour diversity, uniqueness and the contribution of others.



## Justice

We commit to focus on the needs of the people we serve and to work for a fair, just and sustainable society.



## Working Together

We value and appreciate the richness of individual contributors, partnerships and teamwork.



## Leading Through Learning

Our culture encourages innovation and supports learning.



## Key achievements

Number of people  
receiving care  
annually

**1985**

community  
clients

**472**

in residential  
aged care  
facilities  
including  
respite

**5.59%**

of employees  
identifying as  
Aboriginal or Torres  
Strait Islander:

as at 30 June 2021\*\*

**14**

community program  
delivering services  
across the NT:

Number of kilometres travelled  
and number of fleet cars:

**979,149**km

Travelled

**59**vehicles

on the road

**40**

children  
attending  
Mutitjulu

**10**

residential  
aged care  
facilities across  
the Northern  
Territory

**716**

employees

**148,408**

community  
visits made



# About us

**Australian Regional and Remote Community Services (ARRCS) provides care and support to people in regional and urban communities throughout the Northern Territory.**

The Uniting Church in Australia has a long and established history of providing support to people living in regional and remote Australia. Our work began in 2014 when the ministry of Frontier Services, which has a long legacy as an expression of the mission of the Uniting Church in Australia, was reorganised and expanded under a new governance model to further improve the health and quality of life for ageing Australians living in regional and remote areas of the Northern Territory.

ARRCS is proud to be an expression of this ongoing commitment to serve and support those who are most vulnerable so they might flourish and lead meaningful lives. Today, our commitment remains stronger than ever.

ARRCS reaches out to offer opportunity and choice to vulnerable members of our community so they can live 'Life in all its fullness' (John 10:10). We provide support to people in Darwin, Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine, Mutitjulu and Kaltukatjara (Docker River) through aged care and disability services, mental health support, childcare, regional home care services, residential aged care, and school nutrition programs.

Our services are delivered in line with our ARRCS values and in partnership with community members and the people we serve, and with deep respect for First Nations People and their connection to Country.

The ARRCS Board approves the strategic direction and guides the management of ARRCS in achieving its strategic objectives and is responsible for good governance.

The ARRCS Board annual accounts are independently audited and consolidated in the UnitingCare annual accounts. ARRCS is a registered charitable public benevolent institution and reports to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission annually.





# Our services

## What We Do

Building partnerships is central to all that we do. We work together – respectfully, side-by-side, knowing that everyone brings experiences, culture and skills with them, which ensures our journey together is stronger.

Across the breadth of our programs and services, ARRCs ensures that the people and families we work with are making informed decisions. To support their choices, we partner with communities, government departments, regional support providers, health clinics, Aboriginal Medical Services and local GPs.

Our staff and volunteers are compassionate and knowledgeable members of the local community, who are committed to providing personalised care and support. More than a service provider, we understand that we are an important part of the regional and remote communities in which we work and acknowledge our responsibility to ensure our people are connected to those communities, people and cultures.

## Aged Care Services

### Residential Aged Care

ARRCS offers a range of trusted permanent and flexible residential aged care options in our cities, towns and communities that are attuned to our residents' background, life experience and culture. These homes provide culturally informed, high-quality, person-centred care to older First Nations and non-Indigenous people.

Ten residential aged care homes are available across Alice Springs, Darwin, Katherine, Mutitjulu and Tennant Creek.

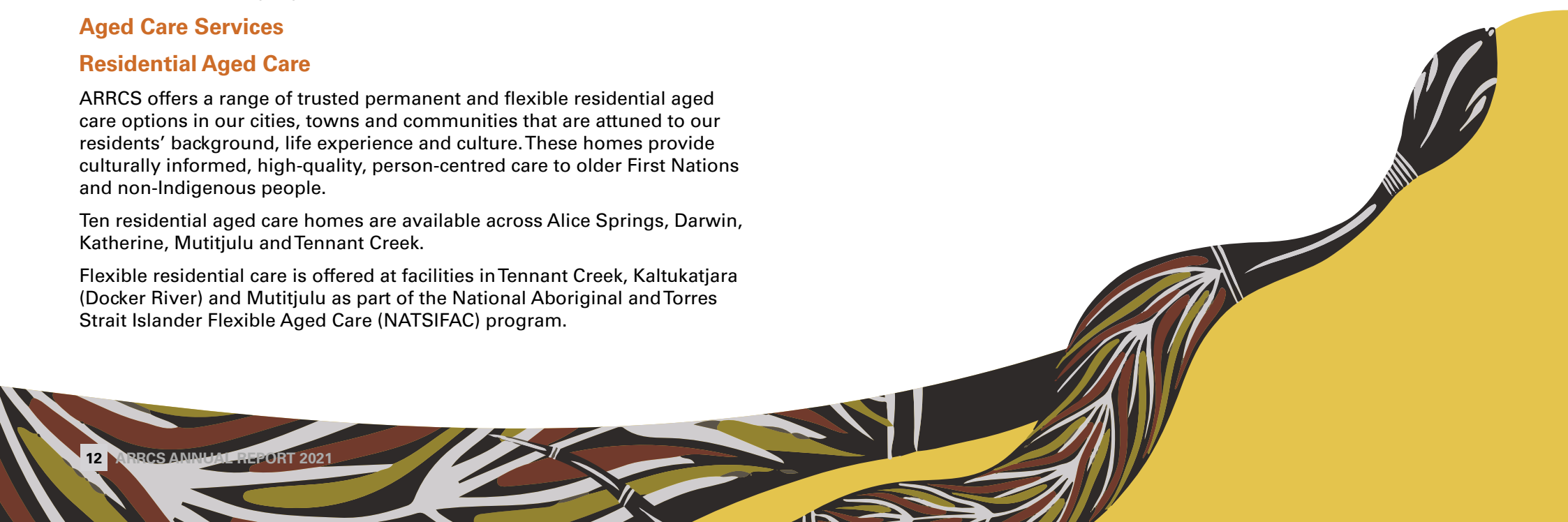
Flexible residential care is offered at facilities in Tennant Creek, Kaltukatjara (Docker River) and Mutitjulu as part of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care (NATSIFAC) program.

### Residential Respite Care

Residential respite care is provided for short stays in our ARRCs residential aged care homes, to people living at home. This care can be planned (for example to enable a carer to take a break or go on a holiday), or can be provided in an emergency, where we support people at short notice, so they can get the assistance they need until their normal routine resumes.

### Community Care Services

ARRCS provides a range of home care services to people in the Northern Territory, taking into account the needs and cultures of all people. As First Nations People are a significant proportion of our customers, engaging with Elders and implementing culturally appropriate care is a priority for ARRCs.



### Respite on Country

Our respite on Country services allows for more people to spend the latter years of their lives in the community. In line with our Strategic Plan, it is our goal to bring meaningful service to those we support. The ability to bring our clients back to the country of their youth for a visit or allow them to remain in the community through inclusion of mobile renal units reduces their stress. Our goal is to give people the option to stay on or visit Country where possible, rather than moving them into unfamiliar surroundings.

### Troopy Program

Our Troopy Program provides respite for carers, community care clients, aged care residents and people in palliative care, through offering transport and the loan of Troopy vehicles to communities on Country. Trips are planned around individual needs, destination, accommodation and distance, with fun activities planned for long drives. In FY2020-2021, ARRCs expanded the program to serve a greater area and to address service delivery gaps in remote communities. We also introduced a “Culture Troopy” to allow the transport of game, helping to maintain connection to culture and Country. The Troopy Program is a key part of our respite on Country services.

### Centre-based respite

Our community centres run regular, structured, day programs that include excursions, outdoor and indoor activities, and holiday activities. During these visits our trained respite workers perform client assessments and develop needs-based programs to enhance quality of life and provide opportunities for community contact and home services. In FY2020-2021, we expanded the respite options to include overnight weekend stays. This has been well received with consistent bookings.

### In-home respite

Our in-home respite focuses on lifestyle activities, assistance with light household duties, personal care, shopping and meal preparation. One of our professional staff will provide these services in the home, enabling clients to remain in familiar surrounds; or be taken out on a day trip or social engagement.

### Nursing

We provide high-quality nursing care to assist people in the community to remain as independent and healthy as possible. Nurses visit clients at home to treat and monitor medically diagnosed clinical conditions; review, administer and monitor medications; provide personal hygiene and grooming; and conduct dementia and social support assessments.

### Allied health

At ARRCs, we help people improve their independence via the following services.

#### Occupational therapy

Assisting clients with activities of daily living by working on cognitive, physical or social problems and advising on specialised equipment, such as walking frames and other aids to support mobility.

#### Physiotherapy

Assisting in diagnosing and treating movement conditions, relieving pain, improving strength and restoring limb function after illness or injury, managing chronic conditions and learning how to use new equipment, such as wheelchairs and other mobility aids.

#### Podiatry

Assisting in the prevention, diagnosis and rehabilitation of disorders of the feet and lower limbs to manage mobility and comfort.

#### Speech therapy

Supporting clients with communication, chewing and swallowing difficulties as a result of a stroke or other health events.

### Health support

#### Diabetes management

We work with people in the community to help them understand and manage the challenges associated with diabetes by providing information and support, counselling and seminars, assistance in choosing the right exercise and diet, as well as managing pain and medications.

#### Palliative care

We provide holistic, culturally appropriate palliative care and support, assisting in home nursing and equipment, pain and symptom management, respite for carers and bereavement support. This service has been expanded to include palliative care on Country or visits to places of significance where possible.

#### Home services

At ARRCs we focus on providing home services that meet the cultural and linguistic needs of our clients.

#### Home maintenance/modification

ARRCS delivers home modification and maintenance services so people in the community can feel confident their surroundings are safe, well maintained and easy to navigate. We install equipment such as easy-access taps, bath rails or shower hoses; create access solutions such as ramps; source devices that can help with daily tasks, mobility, communication and personal safety; and provide general maintenance for items such as smoke alarms, light bulbs and taps.



## Domestic assistance

We help customers retain independence in their own home by assisting with domestic activities and household tasks, including dusting, vacuuming, sweeping, mopping, washing dishes, cleaning bathrooms and doing the laundry.

## Meals

We support people in the community with meals and grocery shopping so they can enjoy a healthy, balanced diet, according to their own tastes. We help prepare meals, assist with shopping, and provide ready-made meals to people in their homes or at one of our centres.

## Transport

We assist people in the community with travel or transport by driving them to medical appointments and social activities, helping them manage public transport, and providing taxi vouchers.

## Social activities

We support clients to keep connected to friends and the community through social activities such as one-on-one interactions in the home, outings with others, trips to the movies or cafes, library visits, council activities, social shopping, second-hand shop visits or community art classes.

## Carer support

We co-ordinate support groups for carers to meet other carers; build skills to care for a person living with dementia, continence issues or other problems; and to learn to care for themselves. Sometimes carers may need a few hours off to tend to some of life's tasks, or simply time to relax. Our in-home respite staff provide assistance with light household duties, personal care, shopping and meal preparation. They go to the client's home when needed, so the person needing care can remain in familiar surrounds or we can take them out on a day trip or social engagement.

## NDIS care

ARRCS is proud to be a registered NDIS provider.

This means we meet the highest standards required by the NDIA to deliver services and support to people who have their plan managed by the NDIA, as well as those who self-manage or use a third party.

ARRCS partners with people in the community to help them manage their NDIS plan and budget, assisting them to pay providers for disability support from their NDIS funds. We help people in the community to understand the NDIS and their NDIS plan, access the opportunities their NDIS plan offers, identify providers to help achieve client goals and engage with informal, mainstream, community or funded supports.

## Childcare and school nutrition

ARRCS works with local parents to provide childcare for the Mutitjulu community.

At our Mutitjulu Itiku Munu Tjitjiku Ngura Childcare centre, we follow an emergent curriculum and provide a welcoming and respectful environment for parents and children. We also work closely with School Liaison Officers to provide nutritious food, delivering breakfast, morning tea, lunch and fruit to students attending schools in and around Alice Springs and Mutitjulu.



## Our workforce

The national health workforce shortages are magnified in the Northern Territory, especially in rural and remote townships. The situation is escalated by the COVID-19 pandemic. ARRCS has worked hard to attract and recruit staff in all sectors of our business.

Our greatest success has been in working with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) to attract a supplementary workforce from the Pacific Islands to fill vacant personal carer and domestic positions. These staff will work in Alice Springs, Tennant Creek and Katherine and stay with us for three years. We hope to expand the program to establish a stable workforce for our most remote facilities. Many other strategies have been put in place to ensure our staff are satisfied with their work and well equipped and skilled to undertake their caring roles, such as:

- Commencement of a Fly-in Fly-out (FIFO) model with a pool of personal care assistants to support remote locations with a skilled workforce.
- Development of videos promoting ARRCS' regional and remote locations as positive and engaging places to work and live, for use in employment campaigns and available on our website.

## Nhulunbuy workforce development

In collaboration with local partners, ARRCS is working to develop a sustainable local and culturally appropriate workforce to support our new National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care (NATSIFAC) facility, which is under construction in Nhulunbuy.

ARRCS is part of the Gove Peninsula's Regional Caring Workforce Development Group, a collection of local caring agencies working toward regional training and collaborations with Northern Territory funding bodies.

We have assisted the company constructing our aged care facility, Scope Building NT, to recruit two local Yolngu men and two other First Nations men from the Northern Territory. Scope Building supervisors have worked alongside these young men to support them into trade assistant roles with the opportunity for consideration into apprenticeships.

Through the Arnhem Land Progress Aboriginal (ALPA) Corporation's Community Development Program, we have shared aged care career information with 10 Yolngu women, five of whom have decided to undertake a Certificate III in Individual Support through Apprentices Australia and CREST NT. It is our desire they will join our new facility's workforce when it opens in 2022.









# Performance against our strategic goals

Considerable consultation took place in FY2020-2021 with the ARRCs Board, leadership team, staff, consumers and external stakeholders to develop our vision and strategic plan for the next four years.

ARRCS' five strategic priorities are centred on our core passion to serve and support our people. They are designed to lead business activity and decision-making at an organisational level and will inform our decision making and planning.

The priorities highlight the need for ARRCs to be:

1. Guided by First Nations' wisdom.
2. Committing to genuine partnerships.
3. Driving innovation and dynamic sustainability.
4. Delivering meaningful service.
5. Acting justly and equitably.

RAP Video: [https://youtu.be/\\_WmHwJxOJ88](https://youtu.be/_WmHwJxOJ88)

Strat Plan: <https://www.rrcs.org.au/about-us/strategic-plan>

## Priority 1: Guided by First Nations' wisdom

ARRCS is committed to the reality and resilience that is First Nations connection to Country, family, spirituality and culture. We look for ways to embed these realities into our service in order to provide holistic and quality care.

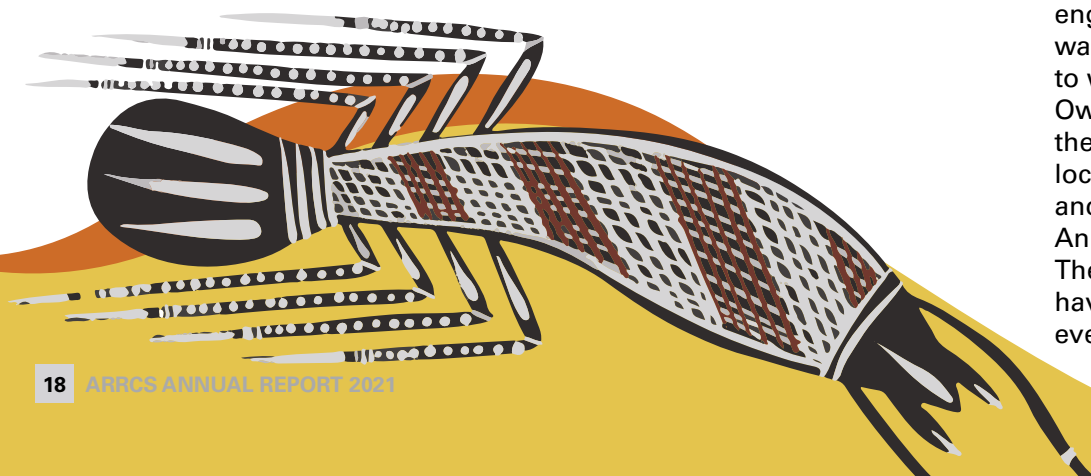
### Centre for First Nations Care

Guided by our vision for Reconciliation, we believe that all Elders deserve proper care, living and dying closer to home with the support they choose and deserve for a life well lived; provided by a workforce they know and trust, made up of people who are supported, trained and accountable.

As part of the implementation phase of the ARRCs 2021-2024 Strategic Plan, our Hetti Perkins Home for the Aged in Alice Springs is being redeveloped as a Centre for First Nations Care. This redevelopment aims to showcase how we can remodel an existing service using First Nations' wisdom to inform a new model of care. Anthony Lew-Fatt, Regional Manager, First Nations Programs, relocated to Alice Springs in February 2021 to lead this important project. He has undertaken a full review of the facility, staff, residents, culture, services and procedures to determine projects that will lead to the development of this new model.

### Nhulunbuy community consultation

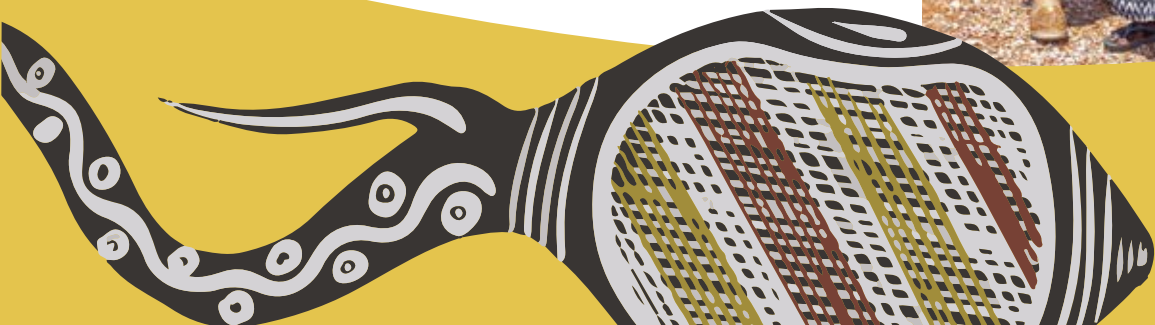
Our Nhulunbuy Flexible Aged Care facility is progressing, with builders engaging with Elders throughout the process. One of the goals identified was to connect young people with the facility, maintaining connection to wisdom and culture. The Emerging Leaders of Rirratjingu, Traditional Owners of the land where the facility is under construction, are designing the gate, which welcomes all clan groups to the facility. Students from local communities are designing fence panels for the palliative care area and local artists have been involved in artwork and other design work. An advisory team meets regularly to walk the site and review progress. They are involved in designing and informing the model of care and have presented at multi-agency health, education and workforce design events across the region. ARRCs has partnered with ALPA Community



Development Program participants to develop pathways for a First Nations workforce. Ten Yolngu women commenced the entry skillset into aged care this year, paving the way for a workforce of dedicated and committed Yolngu staff partnering with non-Yolngu staff.

The ARRCs project team in Nhulunbuy assisted Shakira Cooper, who developed artwork for the facility, through a youth allowance application, which led to a job application for Services Australia, with whom she has now secured a full-time position.

Partnering with the Yirrkala School Literature Production Centre has been an important part of establishing a deep understanding of the new facility's name, Yutjuwala Djewarr or Little Heaven. Yalmay Yunupingu has been instrumental in providing translation and thorough explanation in language. Consultation work continues into the naming of the men's and women's wings and much thought has gone into wayfinding for dementia clients.



# Priority 2: Committing to genuine partnerships

ARRCS will engage in collaborative and meaningful partnerships with Commonwealth, State and Territory governments, industry experts and other external community organisations in providing the best service possible for our communities.

## Planning for an intergenerational program

The co-location of ARRCS with the Yothu Yindi Foundation (YYF) in Nhulunbuy has enhanced opportunities to establish strong and meaningful relationships. In April 2021, the Dhupuma Barker School in the Gunyangara community of East Arnhem Land was opened under the banner of YYF. Plans are under way to partner on an intergenerational program between the school and our aged care facility, with a focus on 4 to 11-year-olds. This partnership reflects the desires of many Elders who see the connection between young and old as vital to maintaining culture and community spirit.

## Engaging HealthX clinical expertise

HealthX, in collaboration with the Department of Health, were engaged to provide additional guidance during our preparation and response to the pandemic. HealthX clinicians visited all services to audit our outbreak management plans and provide education and advice to staff and leaders. Secondary visits provided further training of staff on site to prepare for a potential COVID-19 outbreak within our aged care facilities.

Discussions have commenced with HealthX, which employs nurses for regional and remote Australia, to facilitate the engagement of international nurses to our services on two-year placements. This will be of great benefit to retain experienced aged care nurses with a minimum of three years' experience.

## University collaborations

ARRCS General Manager Wendy Hubbard and Regional Manager for Clinical Governance and Risk Nicole Tate have collaborated with Flinders University and the University of Wollongong on clinical research and workforce development.

## Flinders University

- Under the leadership of Flinders University's Dr Chris Rissel, ARRCS and PainChek are researching the effectiveness of PainChek's facial recognition and identification of other pain elements for our First Nations customers.
- With Flinders University's Dr Narelle Campbell, we are seeking a federal grant to support workforce development and training in remote areas. If successful, the partnership will see an onsite simulation training hub at our Hetti Perkins Home for the Aged in Alice Springs.
- Professor Sue Gordon, of Flinders University's Aged Care Centre for Growth and Translational Research, has sought commitment from ARRCS to collaborate on this research should their grant application be successful. This project will provide ARRCS with support to implement adult learning theory into our staff education programs.
- We are working with Erica Petrovic, Nursing Placement Education Coordinator at Flinders University, to further develop our undergraduate student nursing placement program to build capacity in our clinical workforce and increase professional consideration into aged care as a speciality in nursing.

## University of Wollongong

- Our collaboration with Professor of Nursing Victoria Traynor, acting Head of School at the University of Wollongong, has successfully trialled a federally funded gerontological transition nurse program (developed by Aged and Dementia Health Education Research).



## Employment pathways

ARRCS is continually looking for new and different pathways for meaningful employment. This year we have developed partnerships with the following organisations:

- Alana Kaye College (training):  
[alanakaye.edu.au](http://alanakaye.edu.au)
- Crest NT (training and consultancy):  
[crestnt.com.au](http://crestnt.com.au)
- Indigenous Allied Health Australia (workforce development):  
[iaha.com.au](http://iaha.com.au)
- Ironbark Aboriginal Corporation (employment):  
[ironbark.org.au](http://ironbark.org.au)
- Karen Sheldon Training (training):  
[karensheldontraining.com.au](http://karensheldontraining.com.au)
- Max Employment (employment):  
[maxsolutions.com.au/employment-services](http://maxsolutions.com.au/employment-services)
- Saltbush Social Enterprises (employment):  
[saltbushnt.org.au](http://saltbushnt.org.au)
- STEPS Group (employment and training):  
[stepsgroup.com.au](http://stepsgroup.com.au)
- Voyages Indigenous Tourism Australia (tourism):  
[voyages.com.au](http://voyages.com.au)
- Wise Employment (employment – specialising in people with disability):  
[wiseemployment.com.au](http://wiseemployment.com.au)



## Priority 3: Driving innovation and dynamic sustainability

ARRCS is committed to being strategic, innovative, and sustainable and strives to energise our leadership as an aged care and disability support provider.

### Human Room

We strive to implement best practice care for our Elders, including dementia care, memory support, and specialist health support such as chronic care and end-of-life care for all residents. However, the management of end-of-life care and dementia are particularly challenging in this population.

Our Nganampa Ngura Mutitjulu-nya Flexible Aged Care Facility at Mutitjulu is purpose-built to provide palliative care for First Nations residents that fosters engagement with family and community at the end of life. However, many of our residents would prefer to live their final days on Country.

While ARRCS is developing a palliative care program to make end-of-life care on Country possible, we have also embarked on an innovative alternative identified through Dementia Australia. With funding from NT Health, visual artist and designer Eterpi Soropos will create a Human Room at our Mutitjulu aged care facility, the first of its kind in a remote setting.

The Human Room is an immersive experience that uses video, sound and colour lighting to help reduce stress and induce relaxation. It will be created with specialised equipment, items of significance, artworks and artefacts to provide a peaceful and tranquil place for our First Nations residents. A principal on-site designer will work with local artists, musicians and filmmakers to develop scenes, sounds and videos that depict the local country and surrounds.

We have also approached Dementia Australia to identify targeted programs for our First Nations residents – particularly those with behaviours of concern – as dementia management programs typically focus on non-Indigenous populations and do not always ensure challenging behaviours are effectively managed.

### Clinical excellence

This year ARRCS made great advances in our clinical governance with the implementation of our new Care Governance Framework. The framework sets the fundamentals for person-centred care and sound organisational management, articulating individual responsibilities, accountability arrangements and reporting requirements to facilitate the best possible outcomes for our residents and clients. A new clinical structure commenced with the appointment of Nicole Tate, Regional Manager – Clinical Governance and Risk.



Under the new framework, we have commenced several initiatives, including:

- Negotiation with the Commonwealth Government to implement PainChek, a facial recognition pain assessment tool, as a gratis trial for one year.
- The purchase of Age Simulation Suits, which create the experience of old age, to educate staff and inform an empathetic approach to care.
- Lippincott competency program licence signed to be implemented in FY2021-2022 with support from clinical educators.
- Engagement with Flinders University and the University of Wollongong for workforce development and research opportunities set to commence in FY2021-2022.
- Relationship formalised with Smith & Nephew to provide education and ongoing high-level support in wound management across ARRCs.
- Implementation of Riskman, a customised adverse event monitoring and reporting system. This system supports ARRCs at local and regional levels, providing automatic escalation of reportable and serious incidents, with routine meetings to review and monitor improvements to care.

### **Respite on Country – Troopy Program**

The ARRCs Troopy Program travels the expanse from Alice Springs to all of the cardinal points within Central Australia, including Katherine, Darwin, Tennant Creek and Mutitjulu, allowing our residents to connect with Country.

In FY2020-2021 the program expanded to include a 4x4 bus, and new tires

on Troopy vehicles have made trips further afield easier. The Troopies can now travel into Western Australia, Yulara and Mutitjulu. Trips have included:

- Lasseter's Cave near Kaltukatjura.
- The "V in the River", where several residents and their families grew up.
- Wingellina in Western Australia to reconnect a resident to her homeland.
- Men's Land, where our Men's Group enjoyed a barbecue and damper prepared by our chef.

These trips allow our residents to feel closer to Country. ARRCs Troopy Program Development Co-ordinator Breath Clifton said: "It's more than just driving old people on to Country; it is a privilege. The truth of sitting with people who say nothing but take in the surroundings so deeply, the sense of comfort, of relaxation and sharing memories."

The Culture Troopy has also been introduced to allow residents to transport game. Assigning one Troopy for game ensures the other Troopies remain in a condition better suited to comfortable travel.





## Priority 4: Delivering meaningful service

Working to understand the needs and aspirations of our diverse communities and individuals, developing and tailoring our services, programs and activities to meet their specific needs and enhancing our connection.

### Food Program

Locally renowned Aboriginal chef and business owner Rayleen Brown has been engaged to help us review the food service and menu at Hetti Perkins. She will assist us to determine the actions necessary to align food services with the needs and expectations of our residents – providing culturally appropriate meals and improving consumer choice and control at mealtimes. This engagement will also guide development of additional education and training resources for hospitality staff.

### Linen Program

Our new linen program – where staff pick up soiled linen and return it clean and folded to people who may not have easy access to laundry facilities – has been rolled out in Alice Springs. The linen program, which is available under the federal government's Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) and Home Care Package funding, helps our consumers to remain independent in their homes for as long as possible.

### Improving access to outdoors for our residents

Landscaping has been redeveloped at Old Timers and Flynn Lodge with the help of generous bequest funds from Margaret (Sterling) Bain. Margaret was a resident of the independent living units at Old Timers Village and later Flynn Lodge, where she passed away in 2018. She was a highly respected member of the Alice Springs community and the Uniting Church. Her family have been involved in planning the design with the residents and staff and believe that Margaret's values and lifelong commitment to the welfare of Aboriginal people and communities has been thoughtfully represented. A standout feature are the custom fire pits, which are user-friendly and culturally appropriate to Central Australia.

### Midawarr Day

The second annual Midawarr Day was held on June 18, 2021, bringing together local caring agencies and their clients, to enhance wellbeing and strengthen relationships. The Gove Peninsula Surf Club came alive with activities, dance, music and food. New friendships were made, and old friendships rekindled. Young and old enjoyed each other's company and shared a common sense of wellbeing.

ARRCS was joined by Anglicare, East Arnhem Regional Council, Carer's NT, Top End Health Service, Everybody's Journey Physio, Arnhem Allied Health Service, Outlook Psychology, Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation, Laynhapuy Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services, ALPA, PHN, Datjala Work Camp, Rirratjingu Aboriginal Corporation, Gumatj Aboriginal Corporation, NDIS, Clontarf and Stars Program, Families as First Teachers; as well as clients from homelands, Gapuwiyak and Galiwin'ku and clients on the Peninsula from Nhulunbuy, Yirrkala, Birritjimi and Gunyangara.

With the assistance of the Community Benefit Fund and donations from the Primary Health Network, Midawarr Day representatives from across all agencies worked together for many months to deliver and promote this fantastic event, with far-reaching benefits for the broader community. Midawarr Day was a COVID-safe event, with hand sanitiser stations and sign-in on entry. Planning is under way for Midawarr Day 2022 to be held during Senior's Week.





### Uluru by air

Offering our Elders new experiences and keeping them connected to Country is at the forefront of our commitment to a deliver meaningful service. Our Mutitjulu aged care facility activities co-ordinator, Todd Rayner, thought it would be wonderful if our Elders could experience Kata Tjuta, Uluru and their beloved Country in a new way – by air.

ARRCS partnered with Ayers Rock Scenic Flights to take two groups of Elders – three men and four women – on flights over Uluru. The men and women flew separately so as not to transgress cultural lore. Special permission was also obtained for a new flight path over Uluru. The Elders were in awe of seeing Country from above, and it was a special time for the pilots, who had never before been permitted to fly this route. On their way back, the planes flew low over Mutitjulu, where aged care staff and residents stood outside and waved at the planes, to the delight of all.

Ayers Rock Scenic Flights were gifted with a painting illustrating the flight by the men's group and a traditional dot painting by the women as a thank you.



## Priority 5: Act justly and equitably

ARRCS will provide a fair and equitable place for our clients, residents and employees and take responsibility to ensure the voices of our people and the communities we serve are heard at all levels our organisation and government to ensure full and flourishing lives.

### Addressing racial discrimination

The ARRCS leadership team attended a half-day session to raise awareness of the presence of racism in our organisation, communities and society. The session explored what constitutes racism and the effects on our residents, staff, organisational culture, reputation and workforce stability. The training allowed a safe space to ask questions, reflect on our own values and subconscious behaviours, and gain a greater understanding and awareness of how deeply ingrained racism and discrimination is within our society. The feedback was very positive, with leaders committed to supporting each other and their teams to have the confidence to question, identify, call out and address racism and discrimination within their services, home and community.

ARRCS' face-to-face Cultural Awareness Training has been rolled out, commencing with the community and regional office teams in Darwin. The training incorporates key historical information and legislative changes that have had lasting impacts on First Nations People and culture. It contains interactive discussions about the Stolen Generations, the Northern Territory Intervention, and the resulting intergenerational trauma affecting Aboriginal people and communities. It is built around a framework of two-way learning, a conversation that aims to build upon what staff already know, creating a safe space to ask questions and develop further understanding and appreciation of the diversity and strength of Aboriginal culture across the Territory.



### Consumer information sessions

Quarterly consumer information sessions about the services available at ARRCS and in the community as a whole have been well attended. Attendees have been joined by Disability Legal Support – First Nations Team, Darwin Legal Services and the ARRCS clinical and NDIS teams, offering information on diabetes care, Advance Personal Plans, the complaints process, Meals on Wheels, advocacy services, the Charter of Aged Care Rights, and respite and palliative care options.

### National Reconciliation Week celebrations

ARRCS celebrated National Reconciliation Week as an opportunity to bring people from all cultures together. The theme was “More Than a Word Reconciliation Takes Action” and internal events were held across the Northern Territory, with friendly competition between facilities. Each facility created a mural or artwork that involved staff and residents coming together in a meaningful way, with amazing results.

The winning entry, from Mutitjulu, showed the centre representing Reconciliation, and rays painted by the residents representing how they viewed Reconciliation. Activities co-ordinator Todd Rayner said: “I met with the Elders and asked them to paint how they viewed Reconciliation and what it means to them. The results blew me away. It accurately portrayed what I believe Reconciliation should be: working and living together.”







# The areas we work



## Alice Springs

The Aboriginal Arrernte people are the Traditional Custodians of Alice Springs and the surrounding region. Mparntwe is the Arrernte name of Alice Springs.

Arrernte stories describe how the landscape surrounding Alice, including the MacDonnell Ranges, was created by the actions of their ancestors, the caterpillar beings Ayepe-arenye, Ntyarlke and Utnerrengatye. With a population of approximately 29,000 people, Alice Springs is home to the following ARRCS services:

- Community Care Central
- Flynn Lodge
- Fred McKay Day Therapy Centre
- Hetti Perkins Home for the Aged
- Old Timers Village
- ROST Alice Springs – McNair House
- ROST Alice Springs – St Vincent Welch Cottage
- School Nutrition Program



## Darwin

The Traditional Owners of Darwin are the Larrakia (saltwater) people. Larrakia Country runs far beyond the municipal boundaries of Darwin, covering the area from the Cox Peninsula in the west to Adelaide River in the east. The Larrakia people established the first trade routes in the region, trading with the Tiwi, Wagait and Wulna people, as well as with Indonesian fishermen.

Their stories, songs and ceremonies echo the strong connection and understanding they have with the Saltwater Country. Darwin has a population of approximately 150,000 people. ARRCS services this community via:

- Community Care
- Support Services
- ROST Darwin – Respite House
- Terrace Gardens
- Juninga Aged Care



## Kaltukatjara – Docker River

Docker River is located 670km west southwest of Alice Springs near the Western Australia border. The original Aboriginal name for Docker River was Kaltukatjara and it is still used locally today. Following the relocation of Pitjantjatjara people from the region to Areyonga in the 1920s, many Traditional Owners returned to their homelands in the late 1960s and along with others from the community of Warburton, make up the approximately 440 people that live in the community today. ARRCS offers aged care and community care services in Kaltukatjara via:

- Tjilpi Pampaku Ngura Flexible Aged Care and Community Care



## Katherine

Katherine marks the point where the traditional lands of the Jawoyn, Dagoman and Wardaman Aboriginal peoples converge. It has been a meeting place for First Nations people for many thousands of years and remains so today. The Katherine region has a population of just over 24,000, with 60% of this population identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

ARRCS services in Katherine include:

- Katherine Hostel
- Rocky Ridge Nursing Home
- Katherine Community Care



## Mutitjulu

Mutitjulu is the name of the small Aboriginal community located inside the boundary of the Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, in the shadow of Uluru. It is named after the Mutitjulu waterhole located at the base of Uluru. The Mutitjulu community is home to Pitjantjatjara, Yankunytjatjara, Luritja, Ngaanyatjarra and other Aboriginal people. The main languages spoken in the community are Pitjantjatjara, Luritja and Yankunytjatjara. It has a population of approximately 320 people with nearly 80% identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. ARRCS services in Mutitjulu include:

- Mutitjulu Community Care
- Mutitjulu Itiku Munu Tjitjiku Ngura Childcare
- Nganampa Ngura Mutitjulu-nya Flexible Aged Care



## Tennant Creek

Tennant Creek is a remote Northern Territory town shaped by Aboriginal culture, gold mining and pastoralism. The surrounding area is called the Barkly Tablelands, a region characterised by wide grassy plains, endless blue sky and massive cattle stations. The Traditional Owners of the area surrounding Tennant Creek are the Waramungu people living on Patta land. The population of Tennant Creek is approximately 3,000 and has access to the following ARRCS services:

- Pulkapulkka Kari Flexible Aged Care
- Barkly Community Care

# Celebrating the people we serve



## Resident Artists - Kaltukatjara Art

Tjilpi Pampaku Ngura Flexible Aged Care in Kaltukatjara (Docker River) is home to several working artists, nurtured by Kaltukatjara Art, an art centre that represents artists in the Pitjantjatjara lands of the Northern Territory. ARRCS supports artists Ronnie Allan, Miriam Rennie, Mary Gibson, Tjukaparti James, Marthy Protty and Roslyn Yibardi to attend the gallery to volunteer and create artwork.

Docker River Aged Care Integrated Service Manager Doreen Coughran said the volunteers, “consider it as their daily work, and it gives them a great sense of purpose.”

“They remain active in the community and take great pride when their works are exhibited,” she said.

Kaltukatjara Art sees its core business as, “...the preservation, maintenance and promotion of the artwork ... by nurturing the development of traditional and contemporary artistic practice, exploring new mediums and innovative opportunities for creative expression”<sup>1</sup>.



## Margaret – Tennant Creek resident

Kangaroo tail and sweet potato cooked in the ground dispelled any lingering doubts Margaret and her family might have had when she came to live at our Pulkapulka Kari Flexible Aged Care facility in Tennant Creek. The feast, held within a few weeks of Margaret’s arrival, also included some delicious muffins baked by chef Brian. It was a lovely afternoon spent enjoying one another’s company and some good old-fashioned bush tucker. A happy snap of Margaret with personal care assistant Gina enjoying the afternoon reassured her family that Margaret would be well taken care of in a holistic and culturally inclusive way.

<sup>1</sup> About | Tjarlirli & Kaltukatjara Art ([tjarlirliart.com](http://tjarlirliart.com))



## Max – Mutitjulu NDIS client

Mutitjulu resident Max is counting down the days to his next visit to Alice Springs. But it wasn't always so. Max, who receives disability support services through Nganampa Ngura Mutitjulu-nya Flexible Aged Care, was struggling to find support to visit Alice with his available NDIS funding. With strong connections to the Alice Springs community, he was becoming depressed not knowing when he would be able to visit. ARRCs has worked with Max to maximise his funding so he can see friends and family regularly and engage in activities that are meaningful to him. Max now has a calendar in the office where he counts down the days to his next respite in Alice Springs.



# Celebrating our people and community

## Teaneal McCartney

*Activities officer, Community Care*

Teaneal McCartney started with ARRCS based at Rocky Ridge in July 2020, where she began as an administration trainee. She moved into the role of activities officer for Rocky Ridge and Katherine Hostel, as she spoke language, was forming bonds with the residents and showed an interest in the role.

Teaneal had faced many personal barriers to re-enter the workforce, including reliable childcare for her young child. With the assistance and support of ARRCS, including advocacy by one of our First Nations Program team leaders, she has been able to secure responsible and reliable childcare. Although Teaneal still faces personal barriers, she does not let them interfere with her love for her position. She is looking forward to furthering her career with ARRCS by becoming part of the Troopy Program, where her knowledge of language is sure to assist in communicating with and understanding the needs of our consumers.





## Natalie Kopp

### *Trainee, Troopy Program*

Arrernte woman Natalie Kopp has a passion for supporting the old people in her culture, for which she thanks her grandmother's teachings.

Natalie, who has lived in Alice Springs for most of her life, started her journey with ARRCs in 2020 as a Troopy Program trainee, assisting manager Breath Clifton to deliver mobile respite to Aboriginal people in Central Australia.

"I like this job and I like supporting the old people because I grew up in community life," Natalie said. "I grew up with my grandmother, the knowledge of culture and learning and supporting people back on to Country."

Born with a hearing impairment, Natalie was bullied at school, where she needed assistance to learn speech and lip-reading – all in English. "I went to Year 10 but never really settled at school because I would go to Western Australia for schooling at the places Mullam and Kununurra. I then went to Darwin and lived with my Auntie and later on I went Daly River."

These days Natalie plans to have Cochlear implants to hear more clearly, and her future is looking bright.

"I am strong because (I) followed the footsteps of my mother and grandmother. I have my culture because my grandmother taught me and now I can help old people in my culture."





## Abigail King

*NDIS support co-ordinator, Alice Springs*

Relationship building and problem solving are Abby King's special skills, which come in handy when supporting people with disability across vast tracts of the Northern Territory. After starting with ARRCs in 2018 as a personal care assistant, Abby has moved into disability support and most recently a support co-ordinator role in Alice Springs, completing her Certificate III in Individual Support and starting her Certificate IV in Disability Care along the way.

Abby has visited participants in remote Ampilatwaja, Tennant Creek and Yuendumu, and is looking forward to travelling to Mutitjulu. She understands the logistics of providing care over such broad distances and is in constant contact with other providers so they can travel further afield together. This is an excellent use of funds as participant charges are shared between the service providers, meaning more service delivery for the participants.

"There have been so many achievements in this job that I am truly proud of and give me the motivation to keep doing what I'm doing no matter how hard the job might be and knowing that I am making a difference in our participant's lives," Abby said.

When asked where she sees her future with ARRCs, and her plans for career growth, she said: "I'm not one to really think about my next move, as I never think about what I could do for myself. Rather, it's what can I do to better myself to help those in need."



## Anthony Smith

*Maintenance officer, Kaltukatjara (Docker River)*

Proud Kaltukatjara man Anthony Smith likes to keep busy and takes pride in his work. Anthony joined ARRCS at Kaltukatjara (Docker River) in 2017 as a maintenance officer, working tirelessly to keep the property looking its best.

He can be seen cleaning up the front yard, emptying the bins on rubbish day, and going up to the shops to get items for residents, especially biscuits. Anthony is part of, and works with, the Men's Group and is often found starting the fire at the fire pit and assisting residents to cook up lamb chops and kangaroo tail.

"I like to work, like to keep busy, enjoy doing things for the old people," Anthony said.

He currently assists with the Troopy Program and with the support of ARRCS driver's training, will soon receive his driver's licence. Anthony has been working towards this goal and is looking forward to what it will bring.

"When I get my licence soon, I will be able to take the old people to the shop," he said. "Take out to Lasseter's Cave and even to Warakurna in the bus. That's a long way."





# You can make a difference

Dignity is a Right, Not a Privilege - Elders in our society should live with dignity as a right for all their contributions and sacrifices. Way too often, however, out of sight reinforces out of mind and, unfortunately, out of the heart. Australian Regional and Remote Community Services (ARRCS) knows of these challenges all too well. Since 2014, ARRCS has been providing responsive services and support in communities throughout the Northern Territory to meet the needs of those who are out of sight, mind, and heart for the average Australian citizen.

There are many vulnerable men, women and children living in the Northern Territory. You can improve their quality of life. Your compassion, through generous giving, can help ensure that ARRCS continues to deliver care and support to these Australians. By directly supporting ARRCS' community, aged care, health and children's services, you will be providing a lifechanging gift to some of the most remote and socially disadvantaged people in Australia. For example, your gift could:

Ensure that Elders and Traditional Owners can stay on Country and continue to receive quality community service and care in communities such as Mutitjulu, Kaltukatjara (Dockers River) and Tennant Creek.

See children in remote schools in Central Australia receive healthy lunches through ARRCS' nutrition program to maximise their learning and development potential.

Enhance social connections and wellbeing for elderly people, whether living in residential aged care or their own homes.

When you support ARRCS, you support compassionate care, health improvements and services that enhance lives throughout the Northern Territory. We hope you'll give today. For more information on how you can support some of Australia's most vulnerable people by giving to ARRCS, please get in touch. Call ARRCS Fundraising on 1800 001 953 or email us at [fundraising@arrcs.org.au](mailto:fundraising@arrcs.org.au)



# Coming together through Reconciliation / Reconciliation Action Plan

The Indigenous Programs Team and the RAP Working Group have been discussing ways we can engage the business at various levels in regard to the Reconciliation Action Plan.

We have introduced mandatory online Cultural Appreciation training through Scout, for all ARRCs employees to complete annually.

We also plan to create a monthly ARRCs RAP Newsletter, engaging all areas of ARRCs on good news stories, events and role vacancies.

ARRCS is also in receipt of a \$158,000 grant from the Commonwealth Department of Health for First Nations traineeships across ARRCs. The grant has funded additional administration support roles at our NT regional office, the Troopy Program, and Katherine facilities.

## Mutitjulu and Katherine Careers Expos

ARRCS Indigenous Programs co-ordinator and First Nations trainee administration officer travelled to Mutitjulu to support the Nganampa Ngura Mutitjulu-nya Flexible Aged Care service manager and the team with a stand at Mutitjulu's first Careers Expo. The expo, facilitated by the ARRCs Indigenous Programs

Team, the Mutitjulu community and CDP provider Rise, was an opportunity for service providers from Mutitjulu and Docker River to showcase what they do and the roles available, as well as information on training and education to support meaningful career pathways. While there was minimal engagement by potential applicants, there was great engagement between service providers. The team have also been working with CDP provider Kalano to create similar career pathways for job seekers in the Katherine region.

## First Nations Cultural Specialists

*Les Huddleston, Anthea Tucker and Grant Cooley*

The First Nations Cultural Specialist role is aimed at establishing a connection with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents and to liaise with family members, often in language. They also act as a conduit between the resident, their family and care staff to understand cultural needs and integrate them into the facility using a 'Walking in Two Worlds' approach. Our cultural specialists provide education and embed cultural practices and activities into our service delivery programs and environments. This ensures we appreciate the needs of our First Nations residents, while implementing the Aged Care Quality requirements for our residential facilities.

First Nations Cultural Specialist Les Huddleston rotates between Juninga Aged Care, Terrace Gardens, Katherine Hostel and Rocky Ridge Nursing Home, spending between two and four days in each location.

At Juninga Aged Care, Les has formed a Men's Group, where the campfire is lit, and the men gather to watch the making of damper and billy tea. The residents enjoy the interaction and the yarns. Les has also incorporated spear-making into the Men's Group in response to their wishes.

He also holds art sessions with residents, engaging them with different painting styles. Residents enjoy being in the activity shed listening to music and doing some canvas painting.

On barbecue days, Les entertains residents with his music and singing, taking requests for favourite songs, and getting them to join in karaoke-style.

In addition, he has painted over culturally inappropriate murals at Terrace Gardens and hosted a celebration of a 92-year-old Rocky Ridge resident who participated in the Wave Hill Walk off in 1966.



## NAIDOC celebrations at Juninga Aged Care

Juninga Aged Care celebrated NAIDOC 2021 on July 28. Larrakia Elder Aleeta Fejo delivered a Welcome to Country, followed by a moving didgeridoo performance by First Nations Cultural Specialist Les Huddleston.

The celebration extended the theme of 'Heal Country' to encompass 'healing ourselves'. We offered all attendees head, neck, and shoulder massages by a remedial massage expert, who was kept busy all day. Kevin McCarthy from Crocodile Country entertained residents and guests with music, joined by Les singing some old favourites. Darwin Wildlife Sanctuary also visited with Sweet Pea the baby crocodile, who delighted in mingling with the residents and guests for selfies.

Everyone was treated to a banquet of fresh oysters, king prawns, barramundi, chicken, sweet lamb curry, bush roo stew, rice, and salads. Rachel's Design a Cakes provided a beautiful and delicious cake in the shape of the official NAIDOC poster.

The overwhelming feedback from guests was that Juninga Aged Care's 2021 NAIDOC celebration was an incredibly happy and engaging day, with one guest saying: "The one thing that really will stay with me is how much you and the rest of the staff look after each other and your residents. There's love and respect for everyone there. The residents are relaxed, comfortable and happy. You can see the carers relationships with their residents. There's a real bond and it's one of family."

Another said: "Personally, I thought the day was one of the best I've attended over the years. Music played and the willingness of your staff to get up and 'wobble their nurra' with the residents. I thought the range of food was excellent and the cake exceptional."

## Indigenous Literacy Day

To celebrate Indigenous Literacy Day on 1 September 2020, ARRCs donated books to many schools in the communities we serve. The Vision of the Indigenous Literacy Foundation is that they "...are a national book industry charity dedicated to lifting literacy levels in remote Indigenous communities, so all children across Australia have the same choices and opportunities." <sup>2</sup> It is their goal to raise the literacy levels and improve the lives and opportunities of Indigenous Australians living in remote and isolated regions.

<sup>2</sup> The Indigenous Literacy Foundation | ILF | reading opens doors charity non profit (<https://www.indigenousliteracyfoundation.org.au/>)

# ARRCS Reconciliation Award Winners

ARRCS' RAP Working Group celebrated the second annual ARRCS Reconciliation Week Awards. These awards acknowledge the great work and effort of individuals all year round. The awards are in the following categories:

## Indigenous Young Leader Award

This award acknowledges a young First Nations staff member who has shown outstanding effort in their approach to their role and interactions with all of their clients.

Winner: Shahleena Martin

## ARRCS Reconciliation Week Male of the Year

This award acknowledges the above and beyond work that has been done throughout the year to improve the lives of our Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients. This person shows consistent initiative in their approach to the care and wellbeing of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

Winner: Les Huddleston

## ARRCS Reconciliation Week Female of the Year

This award acknowledges the above and beyond work that has been done throughout the year to improve the lives of our Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients. This person shows consistent initiative in their approach to the care and wellbeing of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

Winners: Poppy Reece and Selina Muir







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